

Outreach Division of School Improvement

December

2014

In this issue

System of Support	Page 1
Effective Use of Data	Page 1 and 2
Acuity Readiness Data Stress	Page 3
CCRA Experience	Page 3
Standards, Assessment Resources	Page 4 and 5
HS Assessment and Standards Update	Page 6
Excellence In Performance Grant	Page 6
1003(a) Grant for Title I Focus and Priority	Page 6
Other resources and materials	

System of Support

It has been great encountering teachers, principals, and superintendents from across the region at various events, meetings, and visits to districts. It is also a privilege to correspond by email and serve all of you in many capacities. It is hard to believe that the Outreach Division of School Improvement is now in its second school year after being established. Over the past year and a half it has been an absolute pleasure to work for all of you and support your work in any way that I am called upon. Please continue to let me know how I can be of service and support. Over this past summer Outreach Coordinators have worked very hard to redevelop the Outreach webpage. There is a growing area of resources and information on the webpage that we feel all schools may find beneficial and useful. The resources are connected to the 8 Turnaround Principles. While these guide the work and school improvement efforts of schools we work with in Priority or Focus status they can also be considered areas and characteristics of effective schools. The webpage is always changing, growing, and evolving with newly added resources, webinars, and effective practices. Please let me know if there are things that you would like to see added that would be beneficial.

www.doe.in.gov/outreach

To continue to establish the system of support that is the mission of the Outreach Division please let me know, as many of you do, how the Indiana Department of Education and myself can support you and your work. Please don't hesitate to email me, call, or text for any reason. I am excited at what has been achieved and accomplished over the past 17 months, and I am excited at the possibilities moving forward. Imagining the Possibilities!

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This edition of my newsletter is a highlight of assessment and standard information. There has been so much information released I want to highlight some of the important information to make sure districts and schools did not miss something in preparing students for the new assessment.

Effective Use of Data

This month, the focus is on the Effective Use of Data—or Turnaround Principle 6. You can also find more information on our [webpage](#).

Using data effectively is a large task, one that can be met with scheduling conflicts, difficulty in accessing data, or even staff buy-in. However, it is a necessary task in improving our schools, whether it focuses on academics, attendance, or discipline. We suggest that schools look at a variety of data, but in particular, data

that supports the analysis of the school's climate & culture as well as student achievement. In order to effectively analyze these pieces of data, you also must embed a consistent process that becomes part of the school culture.



ESEA Flexibility

Waiver

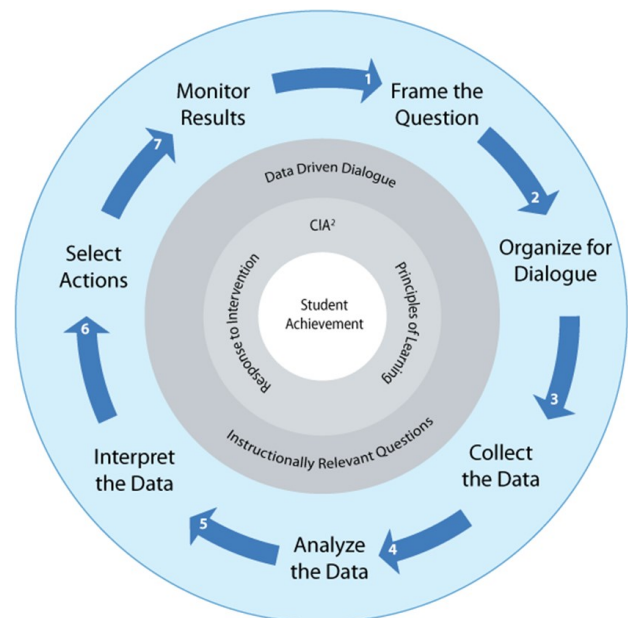
This allows Indiana to be exempt from certain aspects of the federal No Child Left Behind law. It also gives local schools flexibility in how they utilize federal funding and allow more of these decisions to be made at the local level. A copy of the waiver application can be found [here](#).

Analyzing Climate and Culture Data

Keeping a pulse on the climate and culture of a building enables principals to monitor the effectiveness of systems that are in place.

Climate & Culture

- 1) Review data on attendance, tardies, office referrals, suspensions, etc.
- 2) Communicate with parents and families regularly.
- 3) Analyze stakeholder surveys and develop action plans.



Analyzing Student Achievement Data

ALL staff members should be familiar with student achievement data and understand how to use it to drive instruction. Often times, educators can effectively identify areas of interest, but also struggle with the next steps. Principals must ensure that

teachers can understand what that next step is and monitor strategies that are being implemented.

- 1) Data management systems are used by staff.
- 2) A wide range of student data is collected and analyzed.

- 3) Teachers have on-demand access to data and regularly analyze it.
- 4) Effective Protocols are in place to guide this process.

Data Analysis Process

Effective Use of Data requires TIME. It cannot be an **event** where we gather together, look at data, make a plan, and then revisit our efforts in 3 months. It must be a systemic and collaboration approach.

- 1) Regularly scheduled collaboration time for teachers is focused on analyzing formative assessment data.
- 2) Data is used by the principal and other administrative leaders to determine professional development needs.
- 3) Walk-through data is used to ensure the implementation of instructional strategies as well as progress towards data-based goals.

“Without data, all anybody has is an opinion”

-Edward Deming

Thank you.....for attending Regional Standards Trainings

Thanks to the 1,500 + dedicated educators who carved time out of their fall schedules to participate in the Indiana Department of Education's ten Regional Professional Development Sessions, *"Instructional Shifts in College and Career Readiness: Strategies that Empower Teaching and Learning."* Of 290 school corporations in Indiana, 211 were represented during these sessions. We hope this training provided targeted information and practical strategies as educators implement the new Indiana Academic Standards for English/Language Arts and Mathematics (2014) this school year.

For those of you who were not able to join us for one of the sessions, we encourage you to visit the training hub page at <http://www.doe.in.gov/standards/indiana-academic-standards-regional-training-resource-hub> to access all of the content. You'll also be able to watch videos, view webinars, and access informational documents offered during the ten sessions.

Over time, please visit the main standards hub page at <http://www.doe.in.gov> to access new guidance and resources related to the new standards. The IDOE website will serve as the location for all official IDOE information and resources.

Also, if you haven't joined a community of practice yet, we encourage you to consider joining this new platform dedicated to peer-to-peer online collaboration for educators. To learn more about the value of these communities, please visit <http://www.doe.in.gov/elearning/online-communities-practice>.

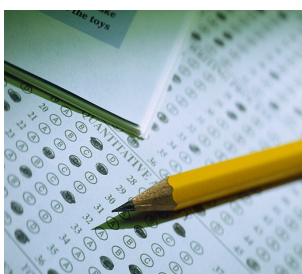
Should you need additional support from the IDOE as you implement the new standards, please complete this request form: <http://form.jotformpro.com/form/32475221212947>. We are reviewing requests on a rolling basis and will respond as promptly as possible to your request for professional development or technical assistance related to the standards.

Acuity Readiness Assessment Data Stress

I realize that many of you may be aware of the stress induced on teachers with the results from the Acuity Readiness Assessment. I want to share and hope to provide some information that Bill Reed, IDOE Secondary Math Specialists, shared over the past few weeks.

Please let teachers and staff know that in the past Acuity was divided up a little differently. The first Acuity assessment had what normally was covered in the first third of the school year. The second Acuity assessment had what was normally covered in the first two-thirds of the school year and the last Acuity assessment had anything from the entire year on the assessment. This year is different. The first round of Acuity assessments has the entire year's material on the test. This means students may perform very poorly since teachers have not taught two-thirds of the material that is being covered on the assessment. With only 25 or so questions on the first Acuity assessment, students should be scoring in the single digits on this round. This is very different than in the past when students would be getting around 15-20 questions correct. The second round of Acuity assessments will also have the entire year's material on the test. So again students will not be scoring as well as they have in the past but should at least be in double digit correct answers on this round. Teachers should also be seeing GROWTH from the first round to the second round and so forth and so on the third round. This is very different from the past so teachers rightfully so are a little distraught. Please be aware and calm the teachers and discuss what is taking place this year in the results of the Acuity assessment.

College— Career Ready Assessment Tool (CCRA Experience)



I want to make sure everyone is aware of this tool to prepare students for the Spring ISTEP+ Part 2 Assessment. It includes all of the technology-enhanced item types that students will see on the assessment this Spring. This is applicable to all grades 3-8. Best practice is to make Experience CCRA a part of instruction. Certainly we want to measure students' knowledge and skills related to ELA and Math on ISTEP+, rather than their ability to interact with technology. The teacher's role in preparing students to demonstrate proficiency on college- and career-ready standards includes the use of Experience CCRA items as instructional tools. Whether used in small groups or with an entire class, a focus on metacognition—what students are thinking about as they interact with the item content—combined with an exploration of response choices enables students to understand concepts and skills more deeply. Experience CCRA is a valuable part of classroom instruction this year! This tool can be accessed at <http://experience-ccra-ctb.com/>. There are some Experience CCRA Resources available to assist educators in using this valuable tool. Resources include Experience CCRA User Guide, Introduction Videos, ELA specific videos, Math specific videos, slides from presentations, as well as Experience CCRA Answer Keys. All these can be accessed at <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/experience-college-and-career-ready-assessment>. Please discuss as a school and district how these might be utilized to give your students every opportunity to be prepared for the upcoming assessment.

Assessment Guidance and SAMPLE ITEMS

The Indiana Department of Education also has a great deal of assessment guidance that I want to make sure all of you are aware of. With a great deal of information being released it can be easy to over look or miss important items. I hope to highlight those for you here. All of the materials that I will highlight can all be found at <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/istep-grades-3-8#iaq>

Assessment blueprints for the Spring 2015 Assessment. Each is a link to the document.

Content Area	Grade					
English/ Language Arts	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Mathematics	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Science	NA	Grade 4	NA	Grade 6	NA	NA
Social Studies	NA	NA	Grade 5	NA	Grade 7	NA

The Item Samplers are also provided for ISTEP+ for educators and student to utilize. The items in each sampler are examples of the types of items found on ISTEP+. These examples can serve as models when teachers are constructing items for classroom assessment. It should be noted that the samplers are not practice tests. Each is a link to the material / documents.

- [English/Language Arts Sample Items Grades 3-8](#)
- [Video: ELA Part 1 Sample Items 3-4](#)
 - [PowerPoint used in the video](#)
- [Video: ELA Part 1 Sample Items 5-6](#)
 - [PowerPoint used in the video](#)
- [Video: ELA Part 1 Sample Items 7-8](#)
 - [PowerPoint used in the video](#)
- [Mathematics Sample Items Grades 3-5](#)
- [Mathematics Sample Items Grades 6-8](#)
- [Video: ISTEP+ Mathematics Applied Skills Item Samples](#)
 - [PowerPoint used in the video](#)
- [Science Grades 4 and 6](#)
- [Social Studies Grades 5 and 7](#)

Instructional and Assessment Guidance

The purpose of these documents is to provide educators with instructional and assessment guidance.

2014-2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English/Language Arts Grades 3-8 2014-15 English/Language Arts Update WebEx (Information regarding 2014 ELA Standards, ISTEP+ Assessments Grades 3-8 Blueprints, Instructional and Assessment Guidance documents, and 2014 ELA Standards Resources) • Video: Using the Blueprints and Instructional and Assessment Guidance for ELA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint used in the video
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics Grades 3-8 2014-15 Mathematics Update WebEx (Information regarding 2014 Math Standards, ISTEP+ Assessments Grades 3-8 Blueprints, Instructional and Assessment Guidance documents, and 2014 Math Standards and ISTEP+ Resources) • Video: Using the Blueprints and Instructional and Assessment Guidance for Math <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint used in the video
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science Grades 4 and 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Studies Grades 5 and 7

Assessment Math Reference Sheets

The new and revised Assessment Math Reference Sheets are not available on the IDOE website. Links to the PDFs for each grade are below. It is important to note that when the Spring Assessment arrives there will be a change in what you may be used to. There will NOT be icons on the ISTEP+ assessment this year clueing the student in to using the reference sheet. This is due to the assessing of the new Mathematical Process Standards, particularly PS.5 which says that students are to know when to use appropriate tools strategically. It is important to encourage teachers to use these reference sheets throughout the school year in classroom instruction as much as possible teaching students how to use them and when they can or should be utilized. It is also suggested to allow students to use them on daily assignments, classroom quizzes, classroom assessments, quarterly assessments, and also on Acuity Readiness assessment. This will provide students every opportunity to know how to use them and be successful on the Spring ISTEP+ in demonstrating the Mathematical Process Standards as well as content knowledge. Again, doing this will give your students the opportunity to be successful on the Spring Assessment. As a side note students cannot use any reference sheet on the Spring Assessment that was used in classroom instruction during the year that may have notes written on them or calculations. Newly printed and clean reference sheets will need to be provided to the students.

MATH REFERENCE SHEETS (direct links to PDFs)

[Grade 4](#)

[Grade 5](#)

[Grade 6](#)

[Grade 7](#)

[Grade 8](#)

These documents can be found on the webpage at <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/istep-grades-3-8>

English/Language Arts and Math Rubrics– Updated

Updated English/ Language Arts writing rubrics, extended response writing, grammar and usage rubrics as well constructed-response rubric are all posted, updated, and aligned to the 2014 Indiana Academic Standards. As with other tools shared in this newsletter it is important that teachers are aware that these are available and they utilize these with their students leading up to the Spring Assessment. The 2 point Constructed-response rubric was designed with the help of Indiana teachers to score student responses to open-ended reading comprehension questions. Below are links that go directly to the PDFs for each rubric. These can also be found on the IDOE website at the following <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/englishlanguage-arts-rubrics>

Rubrics	Writing (6-point)	Extended-Response Writing (4-point)	Grammar and Usage (4-point)	Constructed-Response (2-point)
Grade Levels	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-12
	5-12	5-12	5-8	
	NA	NA	9-12	

For Mathematics the constructed response rubric and the extended response rubric is posted and available for schools. The direct link to the PDF is <http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/assessment/mathrubric8-11-14.pdf>

This can be also found on the following IDOE webpage <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/istep-grades-3-8>

Standards and Additional Resources



There continues to be additional resources released for the updated standards for teachers. Visit the following webpages often to access new resources and materials.

[English/Language Arts](#)

[Mathematics](#)

The ISTEP+ Standards and Assessment Vocabulary for all subject areas are being developed. They should be released in the next few weeks. They will be found at the following <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/istep-standards-and-assessment-vocabulary>

Additionally recently new electronic resources aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards 2014 E/LA have been made available for grades K-2. Grades 3, 4, and 5 will be coming in the near future. Each link that follows will take you to a link to access the document. Join the Learning Connection community of Indian Literacy Liaisons...Read On, Indiana for more resources. The following documents are in this located in this community.

[Kindergarten Indiana 2014 Academic Standards Resources](#)

[First Grade Indiana 2014 Academic Standards Resources](#)

[Second Grade Indiana 2014 Academic Standards Resources](#)

High School college– and career-ready 2014 Indiana Academic Standards (IAS)

Recently the Office of Student Assessment released and updated memo on the transition of assessments and standards. I wanted to make sure that it has not been overlooked by all of you. Much of the information has been shared throughout this fall as part of numerous professional development opportunities. Please pay special attention to the following: pilot details, support for educators, and the Spring 2015 administration. There is also important information on details involving accountability with the upcoming transition of standards as well as the phasing out of ECAs and a new graduation examination are also address.

([standards memorandum](#))

The Excellence in Performance Awards– Due December 17

The Excellence in Performance Awards, totaling \$2 million, are awarded to school corporations and charter schools (corporations) for teachers rated Highly Effective for 2013-2014 in Title I Focus and Priority schools based on 2013 and 2014 student achievement data. Those Highly Effective teachers must be in leadership roles during the 2014-2015 school year and a school corporation must have an evaluation plan that meets the requirements (IC 20-28-11.5) to be eligible. The IDOE is accepting applications for Cohort II of this award. Cohort II applications are due **December 17, 2014 at 4:00pm EST**. Applications must be submitted to performanceaward14@doe.in.gov. Late submissions will not be accepted. ([see attached fact sheet](#))

1003(a) Tier IV Application– Title I Focus and Priority Schools– Due December 19th

1003(a) Application - Tier IV - AdvancED Options

The Office of Early Learning and Intervention is offering a school improvement planning grant opportunity for Title I Priority and Focus Schools. This project is intended for schools to build leadership capacity and stronger school improvement plans that are aligned with USDOE's Turnaround Principles for Focus and Priority schools, Title I Schoolwide Planning, and PL 221 School Improvement Plan requirements.

The following link has all the application information, as well as the eligible school lists: <http://www.doe.in.gov/titlei/tier-iv>

IDOE Staff will be offering open calls on Monday, December 15th from 10:00-10:30 EST, and Wednesday, December 17th from 12:00-12:30 EST. Please call in to get any questions you may have about this opportunity answered.

Call-In Information:

1-877-422-1931

Code: 2989458928

Follow the Reader– Big Goal Collaborative Third Grade Reading Team



Big Goal Collaborative's 3rd Grade Reading Team has developed a tool for increasing our region's literacy. Based on Project READS' curricula to train mentors and parents, Follow the Reader is a highly engaging, highly interactive series of 5 online programs. This Northeast Indiana Original is now available FREE to mentors, tutors, childcare providers, parents, and anyone else within the 10-county region of Northeast Indiana represented by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and the Big Goal Collaborative. The online programs can be accessed through the Project READS website:

<http://abouteducation.org/>

2015 Toyota Family Teacher of the Year Award Call for Nominations



On November 3, 2014, the [National Center for Families Learning \(NCFL\)](#) began accepting nominations for the [2015 Toyota Family Teacher of the Year Award](#), which will award a \$20,000 to an exemplary teacher engaging families in education. Educators working with families through schools, libraries, and many other community-based organizations will be considered, and **nominations are due December 31, 2014.**

Assessment Calendar and Updates 2014-2015

December 8– December 19- ECAs (Early Winter– Part 1)

January 5– January 16– ECAs (Early Winter– Part 2)

January 21– February 27– WIDA ACCESS Annual Assessment

January 22– April 1– ACCUPLACER

February 9– March 6– ECAs (Late Winter)

March 1– April 30– ISTAR (Science and Social Studies)

March 2– March 11– ISTEP+ Part 1– Paper/pencil (Applied Skills)

March 2– March 13– ISTEP+ Part 1– Online (Applied Skills)

March 16– March 18– IREAD3 (Spring)

March 30– May 15– NCSC Assessment (English/Language Arts and Mathematics)

April 20– June 3– ECAs (Spring)

April 27– May 8– ISTEP+ Part 2– Paper/pencil (Pre-approval required) (Multiple-Choice & Technology-Enhanced Items)

April 27– May 15– ISTEP+ Part 2– Online (Multiple-Choice & Technology-Enhanced Items)

June 1– July 24– IREAD3 (Summer)- Online

June 8- July 24– IREAD3 (Summer) Paper/pencil (as needed)

June 18– July 30– ECAs (Summer)

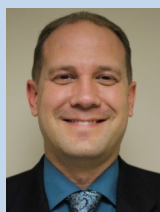
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Doug Thieme
Outreach Coordinator

IMAGINING THE POSSIBILITIES. MAKING THEM HAPPEN.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can support your work in any way at the district and school level. I am here to assist in any way.

Please pass this newsletter on to your principals, teachers, and other school/district personnel that would benefit from the information it provides.

I am continually adding individuals that would like to be added to the newsletter email so that they can receive it directly. If you are one of those individuals please email me to request that your name is added to the list of recipients.

The following remaining two pages contain Professional Development opportunities that are being offered by the Region 8 Education Service Center. PLEASE visit to see the QUALITY sessions that they are providing. They are always looking to add to their agenda and PD calendar. Please let them know of the needs of your district and school.

The last page contains resources that your principals and teachers might find beneficial to improving instruction and their lessons. Please take a look. If you find resources that are useful that schools would find beneficial please let me know.

Professional Development Opportunities and Resources

Region 8 Education Service Center PD Opportunities

Note: Courses with **[A]** have available sessions.

The following are Upcoming Conferences

Implementing the New College & Career Readiness Standards Math 6-8 **Cancelled**

[Non-Traditional Social Studies Resources Vendor Fair](#) **NEW** **[A]**

[Strategies for Success for ELs: K-12](#) **[A]**

[Textbook Caravan-2015 Social Studies K-12](#) **[A]**

[Curriculum Council Meeting](#) **[A]**

[For Educational Office Professionals: Management and Leadership Skills](#)

[Helping Students Develop Argumentation Writing Skills: ELA 6-12](#) **[A]**

[Helping Students Meet the IN Science Literacy Standards: 6-12](#) **[A]**

[Helping Students Meet the Literacy Standards for Technical Subjects 6-12](#) **[A]**

[Helping Students Meet the Social Studies Literacy Standards 6-12](#) **[A]**

[Holocaust Teacher Training Workshop](#) **[A]**

[K-12 Counselor Meeting](#) **[A]**

[K-12 Principal Meeting](#) **[A]**

[ParaPro Test](#) **[A]**

[Reclaim Your Inspiration and Build Student Relationships and Engagement: Gr 6-12](#)

[Understanding the Depth of Knowledge/Deconstructing the 2014 ELA Standards: K-12](#)

Professional Development Opportunities and Resources

Resources

Differentiated Instruction Resources

<http://differentiationcentral.com>

<http://www.differentiatedresources.com/>

<http://www.ericdigests.org/1996-3/mixed.htm>

<http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/differentiating-reading-experience-students-30103.html#strategy-practice>

Guided Math Instruction:

<http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/>

<http://www.k-5mathteachingresources.com/>

www.insidemathematics.org

www.learnzillion.com – for both math and ELA

Content Literacy for College and Career Readiness:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/faq/college-career.pdf>

<http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/ccr>

http://www.wested.org/area_of_work/college-career/

<http://www.readworks.org/>

The National Education Association recently posted 3,000 online lessons, representing the work of more than 100 "master teachers" who translated the College and Career Ready math and language arts standards into classroom activities for every grade. The instructors share classroom videos, samples of student work and candid evaluations of resources they've tested. The project, a joint venture with ed-tech startup BetterLessons, is funded by the NEA and the Gates Foundation. Organizers hope to have 16,000 model lessons posted by the fall of 2015.

<http://cc.betterlesson.com/>

Scaffolding Lesson Strategies:

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/scaffolding-lessons-six-strategies-rebecca-alber>

Literacy Resources:

Reading Resources Network

This teacher site by Scholastic has a wealth of information about how to support students to become better readers. The emphasis is on early elementary. The subsection Strategies for Building Success in Your Classroom is the most important for the social studies teacher with its emphasis on nonfiction, classroom libraries, and guided reading.

Graphic Organizers for Reading

This set of thirty graphic organizers has suggested applications to analyzing, brainstorming, comparing, evaluating, hypothesizing, interacting sequencing and visualizing information.

Content Area Literacy

Here are fourteen strategies for teaching students to improve their reading of history-social science material. Each has an indication of when in the lesson the strategy is appropriate and instructions for applying it in the classroom.

Using Readers Theatre

Readers Theatre is a presentation of text that is expressively and dramatically read aloud by two or more readers. Although there may be some staging or costumes, the emphasis is on reading! English Learners benefit immeasurably because they have the opportunity to practice a text several times as they prepare a performance.

Exploring How Section Headings Support Understanding of Expository Texts

This lesson supports third- through fifth-grade students' exploration and understanding of the purposes for section headings in expository texts. Resources are provided for the teacher to select texts that are appropriate to the students' reading level, interests, and curriculum. The lesson requires students to work together to explore their understanding of section headings and solve problems presented to them. For extension activities, students can write their own expository text using three to five section headings and apply the strategy to the outline format.

Choosing, Chatting, and Collecting: Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy

The vocabulary self-collection strategy involves having students choose the words they want to learn, chat about their rationale for selecting words, and agree upon words for a classroom collection. This strategy is an effective approach to helping students understand the meanings of new words, use them in conversations and writing, and make personal connections with words while reading. The strategy also encourages students to use the words for authentic tasks and on a regular basis in their writing. In this lesson, an online Shakespeare text is used as an example. The strategy can be applied to any content area reading.

Building Reading Comprehension Through Think-Alouds

Studies have shown that the think-aloud strategy improves reading comprehension on tests. Through this lesson, the teacher will model the think-aloud strategy for students. Components of think-alouds will be introduced, as well as type of text interactions. Students will develop the ability to use think-alouds to aid in reading comprehension tasks.

Literacy and Learning: Content Literacy Strategies

Here are over 32 strategies for improving comprehension that can be applied to history-social science content reading. Each strategy is described on a separate, downloadable pdf page

Reading Strategies for the Social Studies Classroom

This Holt, Reinhart and Winston site offers U.S. and World History examples of 10 reading strategies by Judith Irvin. They include previewing text, understanding text, graphic organizers, visualizing, building background knowledge, constructing concepts, making predictions, activating prior knowledge, anticipating information, and developing vocabulary.

Be a Reading Detective: Finding Similarities and Differences in Ideas

This lesson provides a compare and contrast strategy technique for nonfiction writing. First, students are introduced to the terms compare and contrast, and asked to find similarities and differences between two common items. Next, students reference an article practice evaluating text by comparing and contrasting. A Reader's Tool Kit handout guides students to identify ways in which an author relates ideas and relationships. Students are then introduced to Venn diagrams as tools that demonstrate similarities and differences. To show that they understand compare and contrast, students independently apply the techniques they learned to curriculum-based materials and present their findings to the class.

An Exploration of Text Sets: Supporting All Readers

The lesson supports readers of a range of abilities and experience through the use of text sets. A text set is a collection that focuses on one concept or topic and includes multiple genres such as books, charts and maps, informational pamphlets, poetry and songs, photographs, non-fiction books, almanacs or encyclopedias. In this lesson, the class community will put together a collection of text sets on topics of keen interest. They will then explore these texts using three key reading strategies: (1) graffiti boards, (2) browsing for key information, and (3) uninterrupted reading/focused free writing.

Acquiring New Vocabulary Through Book Discussion Groups

This lesson explores various ways in which to foster students' vocabulary skills through direct instruction and small-group discussions. While reading the text *Pink and Say* by Patricia Polacco, students identify words that are unfamiliar to them. Working collaboratively in small groups, they discuss the meaning of these new words using context clues from the text, prior knowledge, and print and online resources. They then apply their knowledge of the new vocabulary to further their understanding of the text. This particular lesson can be modified and reused for other areas of the curriculum, with moderate preparation and researching of topic-related resources.

Extensions are included to further expand vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension.